

Respiratory disease in Germany



INTERNATIONAL
RESPIRATORY
COALITION

The International Respiratory Coalition (IRC) was founded to tackle one of global health's most overlooked challenges: the burden of respiratory disease.

We bring together national coalitions of health professionals, patient advocates and policymakers to develop and implement national respiratory health strategies that address prevention, treatment and care.

The ultimate goal is to reduce respiratory disease-related mortality by a third globally by 2030, in line with the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The German Respiratory Coalition joined IRC in 2026, founded by three organisations: the German Respiratory Society, the German Paediatric Respiratory Society, and the German Society of Thoracic Surgery.

Together, they bring expertise spanning both adult and paediatric lung health and lung surgery. It is continuing efforts to grow and engage patient organisations.

The coalition's mission is to promote lung health and improve respiratory care for people across Germany. Among its first priorities is supporting Germany's lung cancer screening programme, launching in April 2026.

13.4
million

people living with
respiratory
diseases

Societal economic cost by disease:



Asthma

€11.3 billion



COPD

€46.6 billion



Lung cancer

€60.2 billion



Lower respiratory
tract infections

€15.3 billion



Mesothelioma

€1.3 billion



Tuberculosis

€447.2 million



Interstitial lung
disease

€4.3 billion



COVID-19

€9.6 billion



Pulmonary arterial
hypertension

€373 million

135

thousand

deaths from
respiratory
diseases

3

million

healthy life years
lost to respiratory
diseases

€149
billion

societal
economic cost
of respiratory
diseases

The IRC is made possible with the contributions of various stakeholders: IRC leadership is provided by the European Respiratory Society and European Lung Foundation; Additional stakeholders include: the IRC National Coalitions and the Global Allergy and Airways Patient Platform; Funding support is provided by AstraZeneca, Chiesi Group, GSK, MSD, Sanofi and Regeneron.

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